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ABSTRACT

The Utah State Library Division conducted an evaluation of its participation in the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). The evaluation plan determined by the Utah State Library Division used two approaches designed to examine issues and achievements related to LSTA: focus groups and a statewide survey. Utah State University (USU) was involved in the focus group interview (FGI) segment, which explored selected goals and objectives from the grant recipient's and patron's points of view. The purpose of this report is to document the specific activities and findings of USU's portion of the evaluation. One aspect of this FGI project was careful identification of homogeneous groups. Suggestions for groups included library administrators, reference librarians, library patrons, LSTA participants, LSTA non-participants, and PIONEER system users and support staff. Results from LSTA and PIONEER focus group interviews are outlined. The results are combined because responses to interview questions were very similar. Each question has been divided into two sections: Positive Comments and Concerns. Within both sections, responses are further grouped into common themes with the most frequent responses (mentioned three or more times) given in italics. Interview questions include: (1) What are your impressions of the LSTA? (2) Describe the LSTA program as it operates in your library; (3) How has the LSTA affected the workload? (4) What have been the effects of LSTA on customer service? (5) How had the LSTA affected local financial and technical support? (6) What are your perceptions of PIONEER and its service to your patrons? (7) What is the level of support and training for PIONEER? and (8) What are your suggestions as well as future needs and concerns? Impressions by LSTA non-participants of the LSTA and PIONEER are given, followed by direct quotes or paraphrased answers of both "PIONEER users" and "automation users" to the question asking for their impressions of the Library's technology support and of PIONEER. (AEF)

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Focus Group Interview
Evaluation Report for the LSTA

Conducted by the

Department of Instructional Technology

Utah State
UNIVERSITY

Spring 2001

Report Prepared by Byron R. Burnham and Virginia E. Gilbert

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Evaluation Report for the LSTA

The Utah State Library Division is currently conducting an evaluation of its participation in the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Utah State University (USU) is participating in one segment of this evaluation, and the purpose of this report is to document the specific activities and findings of USU's portion of the evaluation.

Executive Summary

LSTA has been successful in bringing technology to libraries. Many people reported that this project has added needed technologies, allowed libraries to move into digital environments, and provided patrons with more resources, information and faster service. Another aspect of the LSTA has been an "equalization" among libraries in terms of access to information, no matter what size of community or population. In some respects this project has "equalized the playing field" in a most positive sense – it has not "borrowed" from the wealthy and given to the poor, but rather has enabled smaller libraries to access important information.

Another aspect of the program has been the access afforded to patrons from their homes in terms of access to information and library services. However, it must be pointed out that this kind of service is likely limited to those households that can afford the technology.

Research in the library is changing in nature. Print materials and even software programs and CD's are being used less while the Internet is gaining in usage. In fact, a complaint was heard that patrons are leaving the more traditional sources of information for the Internet. While reasons for complaining were not given, they were very real.

Libraries not participating in the LSTA program have some perspectives and assumptions that prevent their participation. It seems that in some cases, these perceptions are based on incorrect information. For example, some people feel that the rules of LSTA change from time to time, when in reality the judgment criteria may change depending upon the number of proposals.

Other perceptions involve the bureaucracy, complexity, and formality of the application process. Smaller libraries, especially, have trouble working through the processes involved with the application. They do not have experience with proposal writing and as a result do not often compete for the larger grants.

Other libraries have the "luxury" of other sources of income and as a result, do not feel as pressing a need for participation in the LSTA.

Comments were made about the awkwardness of partnerships built upon technology. Common program goals and purposes are more likely to be better foundations for partnering than obtaining technologies. Funding was very political in that LSTA funds were sometimes used as replacement dollars for existing budgets.

Training is a constant and changing need and is under funded. Training demands are constant because new staff members are continually being hired and need skill training. It is also a changing need because new technologies require additional training. Under funding for the amount of training that is required to stay current with the exploding information and tools used in libraries is a ubiquitous problem.

There are negative aspects of technology and LSTA. One of those deals with on-going support for technology. LSTA projects provide the funds to acquire technology, but not to keep the technology up to date and functioning. Whenever problems occur and technology systems go down, it is the larger libraries that employ technicians, and thus are able to recover quickly. Smaller libraries report "being down" for hours, days, and in one case a week because of inadequate support. Smaller libraries often rely upon technicians that are either private contractors, or that are hired by another governmental unit (e. g., a school district, city, or county). Whenever this latter arrangement is in place, the library is often the last demand met by a busy person. Sometimes the library jointly shares a technician. One problem with this approach is that jointly shared technicians are usually unfamiliar with library operating systems.

Another negative aspect has to do with other than library use of the technology. This takes two forms. One is the overcrowding and high demand peak periods that correspond to the ending of the school day. In some instances librarians feel that they are becoming after school care providers. The other form is the changing nature of libraries in the eyes of the patron. Besides becoming youth care centers, libraries are also seen as "cyber-post offices." One interviewee even noted that she ran her business from the computers at the library.

In spite of these negatives, librarians feel that their productivity has been greatly increased allowing them to do more for patrons and to do it faster. Patrons also recognized increased productivity.

Need for the Project

The evaluation plan determined by the Utah State Library Division used two approaches designed to examine issues and achievements related to LSTA: focus groups and a statewide survey. USU was involved in the focus group interview (FGI) segment, which explored selected goals and objectives from the grant recipient's and patron's point of view.

Focus Group Interview Evaluation Project Activities

A team of trained personnel from the Department of Instructional Technology at USU was selected to conduct the FGIs. The team consisted of Byron Burnham, Nick Eastmond, Virginia Gilbert, Erin Edwards, Andy Walker, Kay Seo, Heather Mariger, Craig Woll, Jonathan Kadis, and Mary Ann Parlin. The team developed a set of protocols that were used to guide all interviews. They conducted four pilot interviews, analyzed results, and redesigned the protocols for subsequent FGIs.

The interviews were intended to provide information concerning the feelings and attitudes of the library users community surrounding the issues and impact associated with the LSTA grant program. The users included administrators, library personnel, and library patrons.

Amy Owen, Division Director, and Douglas Abrams, Deputy Director, were responsible for setting up the FGIs. Twenty groups were originally planned, but two groups were eliminated creating a total of 18 FGIs conducted. These interviews took place during April and May 2001.

Each team documented its findings and one team member analyzed and compiled the material from all of the interviews. This analysis was intended to discover trends and issues among the people interviewed. Additionally, these interviews were analyzed across groups to provide an understanding of shared concerns among the various groups.

One important aspect of this FGI project was careful identification of homogeneous groups. Suggestions for groups included library administrators, reference librarians, library patrons, LSTA participants, LSTA nonparticipants, and Pioneer system users and support staff. Additionally, libraries of like size were grouped together as far as possible. The cooperation of the State Library Division was essential in organizing and scheduling the group meetings, and the Division is to be commended for the efficient and professional manner in which these focus groups were brought together.

The following matrix provides an overview of how the groups were distributed by job areas and LSTA and PIONEER involvement.

	Library Administrators	**Reference Librarians**	**Library Patrons**
LSTA Participants	3	2	2
LSTA Non-Participants	3	2	
PIONEER System	NA	4	2

This design provided preliminary indication of differences among LSTA participants and non-participants and will be useful for a follow-up survey to confirm and explore these differences.

The actual meeting configuration closely followed the design. The only major deviation from the planned design was treating two patron-oriented focus groups as though they were individual interviews. The data from those two interviews did not deviate from the overall tone of the other groups. The following table provides the date and place for each of the interviews including the four pilot interviews.

GROUP	DATE/TIME PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION
1	**4/5 10:00 a.m.** **LSTA Participants**	**North Logan Library**
2	**4/6 10:00 a..m.** **LSTA Participants**	**Orem City Library** **Media Exploratorium**
3	**4/6 1:00 p.m.** **PIONEER**	**Orem City Library** **Media Exploratorium**
4	**4/6** **LSTA**	**Murray City Library**
5	**4/27 9:00 a.m.** **PIONEER** **Public Service Staff**	**North Branch Davis County Library, Clearfield, Basement Meeting Room**
6	**4/27 1:00 p.m.** **PIONEER** **Public Service Staff**	**Murray City Library** **Library Board Room**
7	**4/27 1:00 p.m.** **LSTA Grant Participants** **Public Library Directors** **Medium-Large Libraries**	**North Branch Davis County Library, Clearfield, Basement Meeting Room**
8	**5/2 9:00 a.m.** **LSTA Grant Participants** **Academic Library Directors**	**Murray City Library** **Library Board Room**
9	**5/2 9:00 a.m.** **LSTA Grant Participants** **Small Public Library Directors**	**Murray City Library** **Library Auditorium**

GROUP	DATE/TIME PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION
10	5/2 1:00 p.m. LSTA Grant Non-Participants Public Library Directors	Whitmore Library Library Auditorium
11	5/2 1:00 p.m. LSTA Grant Non-Participants Academic Library Directors	Salt Lake Community College Library, Room 146
12	5/11 9:00 a.m. School Grants Partnerships	Orem City Library Media Exploratorium
13	5/11 1:00 p.m. Service Recipient Libraries ILL/Resource Sharing Staff	Orem City Library Media Exploratorium
14	5/16 1:00 p.m. LSTA Grant recipient Libraries ILL/Resource Sharing Staff	Murray City Library
15	5/18 9:00 a.m. Library Users - Automation	Logan City Hall Northeast Meeting Room
16	5/18 1:00 p.m. Library Users - PIONEER	Logan City Hall Northeast Meeting Hall
17	5/18 9:00 a.m. Library Users - Automation	North Branch Davis County Library, Clearfield, Basement Meeting Room
18	5/18 1:00 p.m. Library Users - PIONEER	North Branch Davis County Library, Clearfield, Basement Meeting Room

The analysis of the FGI results was accomplished by one team member who read, re-read, and read again the transcripts from the interviews in addition to carefully listening to the taped sessions (all sessions were recorded). The data from all 18 interviews were used in the analysis. It was determined that there were not substantial differences between the four "pilot" interviews and the other 14. Interviews were typically attended by 4 to 5 individuals with some interviews having as many as 12 people and others as few as 2. The interviews lasted about 1 to 1.5 hours. Most of the interviews were conducted from Orem on the south to North Logan on the north.

Some interview participants drove great distances to take part in the interviews. (For example, several participants drove from Cedar City and St. George to attend sessions.)

The particular people who provided data for this report were purposefully chosen to provide information that would help us describe the feelings, issues, problems, and concerns that might be associated with the LSTA project. The following results section provides that information in a bullet format by questions that deal with particular themes. Bullets were selected to present the information in order to keep the report easily readable.

LSTA and PIONEER Focus Group Interview Results

The following outline represents a summary of the results from both the LSTA participant and PIONEER focus group interviews. These results were combined because the responses to interview questions were very similar. Each question has been divided into two sections: (1) Positive Comments and (2) Concerns. Within each of these sections the responses have been further grouped into common themes with the most frequent responses in *italics* (mentioned three or more times). The final question constitutes the suggestions and advice shared by focus group participants, arranged by themes.

1. What are your impressions of the LSTA?

All focus groups were asked this question whether they directly participated in the LSTA grant process or not. Most participants, no matter their involvement with the grant process, were aware of the benefits received from these funds, and most had opinions about it.

Positive Comments

Benefits

- *It is a great grant that has made a big difference. It is "exhausting" writing the grant but "worthwhile." We "could not do without it." "Very needed." "Thank you." "Keep it going."*

- *LSTA grants are considered important funding sources that many libraries depend upon for technology. With grant money, computers, Internet access, software, Spanish materials, adaptive technology, training, and upgrades can all be funded.*

- *These grants make Internet access available. With the Internet libraries become "relevant," and their "image" increases.*

- This grant also provides funds for fax machines, printers, collection development, digitization of newspapers and health pamphlets and training programs.

- LSTA funding is making ILL easier.

Grant Writing Process

- *Participating in the LSTA grant process and being successful with it lifts participants professionally and provides them with professional development opportunity as they learn how to write grants.*

- *The assistance received from the State is needed in order to understand and to write the grants. Participants find that information about deadlines posted on the web is very helpful. All help received is greatly appreciated. Several focus group members mentioned how helpful the telephone support is, especially the Grants Coordinator's assistance.*

- *Being successful with the grants and receiving money through this process is like 'priming the pump' for many participants. Some mentioned how this money seems to draw and attract more money and support from other sources. It allows for greater success and makes it easier to find matching funds.*

- *Many expressed how LSTA funds are even more helpful when there are matching funds and collaboration -- though this is hard to do.*

- Some consider the new grant system to be better and faster than the previous system.

- Referring to LSTA grant money one participant said, "It gave us hope."

- There is high regard for the fair way LSTA is administered compared to other grants in other states.

- Those who had grant writing experience and expertise find the LSTA grants easy to write.

Concerns

Grant Writing Process

- *The whole grant writing experience is considered difficult, complicated and too time consuming for those who lack personnel, resources, time and expertise.*

- *Most participants want less paperwork and bureaucracy plus a simplification of the grant process. Libraries with limited background and experience in grant writing feel that a model to use as a guide as well as online posting of examples of successful grants would be helpful.*

- *The grant process is "intimidating" for smaller libraries and others without expertise -- because of this many will only apply for mini grants. Many expressed how difficult it is to be rejected for grants. One participant called the process a "nightmare."*

- *Many have the impression that if you simply state the facts in the grants, you are turned down. One participant said that he felt that "goals needed to be manipulated to fit the grant."*

- One library copied another grant application that had been approved, but they were turned down for lack of sufficient detail.

- Some participants feel that the rules change every time a grant is submitted.

- Others expressed concern that they are asked to send in the same information over and over again, information that they have already submitted.

Training

- *Those who find the grant process difficult and intimidating want training on how to write grants.*

- *Most want grant writing seminars online or taught onsite because time and money is not available for travel and accommodations.*

- Some indicated that they have experienced information overload at conferences and need more time to receive and digest material and knowledge shared.

LSTA and Schools

- *LSTA does not seem to understand the needs and goals of school districts and academia. Academic categories are too narrow in order to qualify to receive money. One participant said that LSTA is not "user friendly" with school goals.*

- Some schools feel unwelcome in the grant process.

- It is thought that the word about these grants is not out to schools sufficiently.

- Some school personnel are frustrated that the State Legislature does not pay for professional Library Media personnel: however the LSTA says you have to be a certified Library Media Specialist.

- Some negative feelings were expressed about schools being allowed to qualify for grant money.

- Others shared that it is difficult to do collaborative loans with schools because they are too "territorial" and "competitive."

- Some expressed that they would like the computers and technology that are given to schools to be available for public use after school hours by having (1) outside entrances to computer labs and (2) personnel to run these labs once the schools are closed for the day.

Collaborative Grants

- *Though those who have had success with collaborative grants want more, most participants agreed that 'cooperative grants' are very difficult to do. It is hard to please everyone involved, particularly when there are different goals and financial entities and interests.*

- *Except for the few who have been successful with matching funds, the majority feel that it is hard to find matching money unless government officials and administration are supportive of the libraries.*

- Some participants who did not have the support of their city officials or district administrations want a message sent to these administrators plus city councils and mayors that grant money is to supplement, not replace, other funding.

Purpose and Scope of the LSTA Grants

- *Many participants are bothered by the narrow emphasis on technology, and they want more grant money for non technology resources. They want broader grant applications beyond technology and more categories.*

- *Many seem confused about what the grant funds can be used for and want these uses listed and clarified.*

- Some mentioned they liked the LSCA better because it had a broader application.

- Some believe that in order to get a grant you have to focus on some needy population.
- Others question the need for a 5 year technology plan because of the constant changes that are taking place in technology.
- Some do not apply for grants because they feel they have to manipulate their needs to fit the grant rather than having the grant fit their needs.

2. Describe the LSTA program as it operates in your library.

Positive Comments

Programs and Benefits

- *Due to LSTA funding libraries have Internet and online access for patrons and staff (email, renewals, overdue notices, holds, etc.)*
- *Interlibrary loan is becoming easier because of the computer and the Internet.*
- *Email for employees and patrons saves time and provides a resource for on going information and communication.*
- *Research is easier as a result of online databases.*
- *Less time is required for magazine and periodical retrieval. This helps to free more time for research purposes.*
- With the LSTA funds some libraries are able to develop training programs for patrons and staff.
- It provides computerized and online card catalogues.
- Because of new technologies, digitized resources are being put online and can be accessed nationally and internationally.
- LSTA money produces an increase in foreign language publications, especially for Hispanic populations.
- These funds are providing access to Special Collections as well as less known collections.

- Special needs groups like the elderly and disabled are being better served by the programs funded using LSTA grant money.

- Some participants said that they are able to set up programs faster. One group member stated that LSTA helped them "knock two years off implementation time."

- Grants are shaping the collections within the libraries due to Internet resources.

- These grant funds provided one library with the money for a nationally recognized project. It is one of the top ten projects of its kind in the nation.

Concerns

Increased Needs

- *LSTA adds money for technology but it does not 'free up' money because of the extra funds that are needed for technical support and maintenance costs. Many want a set amount of money for technical support and maintenance to be included in each grant for technology.*

- *New technology creates a need for more training which requires both time and money. Many libraries do not have the personnel nor the resources for this training.*

- *Email use requires computers and the Internet which interferes with research use. More computers are needed to adequately meet both needs.*

New Policies

- *Most libraries have implemented new policies to deal with computer use. These include time limits, allocation of computers to research, and deciding whether to allow email use and/or chat rooms.*

- *The Internet has created filtration problems and concerns for many.*

Changes

- *Most children do not use printed resources, software and/or CD's. They only want to use the Internet.*

3. How has the LSTA affected the workload?

Positive Comments

- *LSTA has lessened the workload, but most participants said they are busier teaching patrons and answering questions.*
- *LSTA has shifted and altered workloads and priorities. More time is required for grant writing, training, and technology.*
- *Both the number of patrons using computers and patron requests have increased.*
- *Patrons' expectations have increased. However focus group participants feel they are able to meet these expectations better because of the technological resources available to them.*
- *Library staffs are able to do things faster. Everything is at a much faster pace.*
- *Participants said that they are able to do more and are more productive and efficient.*
- They are able to process more ILL requests. There are more ILL requests to process, especially from professionals (lawyers, medical personnel, etc.).
- Some expressed that they have more time to spend with patrons because of the technology.
- For some, because there are fewer clerical issues, there is more time available.

Concerns

- *Participants said that they are busier because they have both the traditional services as well as the new ones without any increase in time, money or personnel. Many participants, especially those from smaller libraries, said they do not have the time nor the personnel to write grants and manage their day to day duties.*
- *If computers are down, it takes more time to do everything. One participant said that "if the computers are down, the whole world stops."*
- *The peak times occur when children are out of school. Many parents drop off their children at the library, and some participants sense libraries are becoming babysitting establishments.*

- *New technologies are creating many learning issues for patrons and employees. Training is needed for staff members and patrons of all ages and expertise. This means more time and money are needed for training and teaching.*

- More staff with technological skills is needed.

- In many libraries more time is being spent monitoring and supervising Internet use.

4. What have been the effects of LSTA on customer service?

Positive Comments

- *More patrons are using the library, especially for the Internet and email. Even tourists come to the libraries to check their email.*

- *Many services are being expanded because of online access. Patrons are able to find their own resources as well as order and renew online.*

- *Librarians and staff are able to serve patrons better and are able to answer their questions more often using online resources. They are able to access information more quickly.*

- *LSTA equalizes the resources available, even to small rural libraries, throughout the state.*

- *LSTA grants are providing needed funds to buy computers, providing patrons, who do not have computers at home, with Internet access and other online resources.*

- *Patrons with computers at home are able to access more and more services from their homes. They find this to be beneficial, and they want increased access from home.*

- There are no time constraints since some services can be accessed day and night and at the last minute.

- Because there are fewer clerical issues, there is more time to devote to patrons and their needs.

- Due to Internet resources and online texts there is less vandalizing of books and magazines than before the Internet.

- For some libraries LSTA provides services for their patrons that their cities cannot or will not fund.

Concerns

- *Use of the library is increasing. In one library there has been a 25% increase of library use over the past two years without any increase in personnel.*

- *Some participants expressed their concern that there is too much surfing of the Internet, as well as email and chat room use, rather than research. In many libraries new policies have been made involving supervision, time limits and filtration.*

- *Students think that the Internet is the only resource and will spend hours searching for information on-line when printed resources are available in the library. They only need to ask for assistance, though most do not.*

- *More and more Hispanic people are using the library services. This population needs more information and resources in Spanish.*

- *Patrons have higher expectations and want immediate results. Their demands have increased.*

- More classes about the Internet are needed for special needs patrons and minority populations.

- Because of the Internet children are not using the software and CD's as much anymore.

- Participants mentioned that accessibility for disabled is an issue (especially in older buildings).

- Some patrons still fear technology and need much assistance, training and reassurance.

5. How has LSTA affected local financial and technical support?

Positive Comments

Financial Support

- *LSTA grants provide money and services that would not be available otherwise. Before these grants, budgets were frozen for many participants.*
- *Matching money is helpful and needed. LSTA makes it easier for some to get matching money. "People are more willing to fund winners." Grant money seems to attract more money and support. It "primes the pump."*
- *A good relationship with administrations and government leaders is vital for funding.*
- Less money is being spent on postage and handling expenses because many services and resources can be accessed online.

Technical Support

- *Many participants rely on city, county or outside sources for technical support. When this help is reliable and timely, participants benefit from these services. Some rely on in house staff and technical support departments and find it helpful to have assistance available whenever it is needed. Some libraries are requiring staff to have computer skills in order to be hired.*
- Participants shared that if they have strong administrations, they can get extra funding for technical support.
- Some are using the expertise of high school students to design Web pages.

Concerns

Financial Support and Needs

- *Many expressed that technical support is too costly for their budgets. Maintenance problems require more money and result in over spending for technical support. This situation was described by one group member as a "nightmare."*

- *Money for maintenance is a continuing need that many would like to be covered as part of LSTA grant funds.*

- *Because of technology, budget needs have changed. More money goes to technology and its maintenance.*

- *For many it is difficult to get city, district or county money. Some have experienced problems with disbursement of money from cities and districts.*

- *The funding received by libraries is often political. Some cities and districts use the LSTA dollars as replacement dollars for library budgets.*

- More money is needed to hire qualified people with technological skills.

- Participants expressed that money is needed for additional things other than technology.

- Extra funding and matching money depend upon the strength of administration or government leaders.

Technical Support

- *Technologies require constant technological support.*

- *More technical support is needed.*

- *Many rely more on outside sources for technical support which takes time and extra resources. Immediate help is not available for many. Some have to wait a week for assistance. A participant who depends upon outside sources described the lack of technical support as a "nightmare."*

- *More in house support is desired and needed by most participants. One participant said that it is a "headache" not to have in house support.*

6. What are your perceptions of PIONEER and its service to your patrons?

Positive Comments

Perceptions

- *Participants described PIONEER as a "Great system" and said that they "Can't live without it." "It is great!" "Wonderful." A crucial resource.*
- *"Patrons think we can work miracles and PIONEER helps us to be able to."*
- *It is "an integral part" of our service.*
- "I'd feel badly if we lost it."
- The people at the Utah State Library do a good job of listening.

Uses and Benefits

- *PIONEER enhances the collections for all libraries no matter their size or location. It equalizes services and resources throughout the State.*
- *According to focus group participants PIONEER is used mostly for medical information, Bluebook prices, car repair, travel information, business information, job searches, home searches, genealogy, historical searches, newspapers, directories, magazines, periodicals, government and legal information, tax forms etc. In some libraries it is used in place of encyclopedias. It provides access to many important databases.*
- PIONEER provides answers and full text. "A nice tight resource to direct searches."
- Many participants like Poem Finder (mentioned often) and photo archives. Utah Kids is also considered a great site.
- They like the links with other libraries and their resources.
- PIONEER provides a doorway to the Internet.

Design

- *PIONEER is used as the Web page for many libraries.*
- Some said that PIONEER is becoming more user friendly.
- Others stated that it is well laid out and attractive.
- Participants thought that it is well organized for searches. The subject headings and categories are well organized.
- Most appreciate that PIONEER is up-dated frequently and has reviewed sites.

Collections and Research

- *PIONEER provides access to periodicals and magazines that cannot be afforded otherwise.*
- *It reduces the number of periodicals and magazines that need to be purchased.*
- *PIONEER is extremely helpful when students have the same assignments and need multiple copies of the same source.*
- *With PIONEER, library staff is able to customize research and resources for patrons.*
- It is helpful when students are taught about PIONEER at school. It reduces the time needed for training at the library.

Concerns

Utilization

- *Many do not know about or understand the value of PIONEER, resulting in under utilization.*
- *More and better home access to PIONEER is needed.*
- More PIONEER databases are needed.
- Some part-time staff members are not interested in PIONEER.
- More students need to be taught about PIONEER.

- There needs to be a way to assess public opinion concerning the site.

Publicizing PIONEER

- *PIONEER needs to be publicized more on television and in the schools with ads and posters. The current brochures are not very effective publicity.*

Design

- *The PIONEER web page needs to be better organized with fewer clicks. It is difficult to navigate.*
- *The category system is too complicated and needs to be simplified.*
- Links need to be evaluated and maintained more frequently.
- Web page design is out-dated. Links are too close together.

PIONEER's Name

- *The name PIONEER needs to be changed. Many think it is a church or a genealogical site. Many librarians do not use the name in order to avoid confusion.*

7. What is the level of support and training for PIONEER?

Positive Comments

Support

- *The support is appreciated.*
- *"The Continuing Education Coordinator is good."*
- "The State comes any time."
- Email is very helpful for communication purposes.

Training

- *Workshops are very helpful and needed.*

Concerns

Support

- *Participants want more access to help when they have questions.*
- Sometimes changes are made without being communicated in a timely manner.

Training

- *It is difficult to take the time and money to attend training in Salt Lake, especially for smaller libraries. On site training is needed to address the needs of different sized libraries and the various kinds of equipment in each library.*
- *On line training would reduce the need to travel to Salt Lake for training.*
- *Because of high staff turnover there is a constant need for training in most libraries.*
- *Many who have attended workshops and training felt too much information is given in too short of a time. They experience "information overload" and find it difficult to share and disseminate so much information when they return to work.*
- Staff members are disappointed when workshops are canceled.
- Training requires a high skill level to implement.
- Training also needs to be for various levels of expertise.
- Use of technology depends on the staff and patrons' training.
- Videos, CD's, and a variety of different teaching tools need to be used to train staff and patrons.

8. What are your suggestions as well as future needs and concerns?

Training

- *More on going training for new technologies is needed. Solutions to technical and software problems are wanted.*

- *More frequent and intense workshops are requested.*
- *Refresher courses and retraining are also needed.*
- *Participants would like the grants to cover on site training for employees and patrons. Some suggested a mobile unit in order to do training on site, or online courses.*
- Many requested that city councils be taught about technology needs and the proper distribution of grant money.

Grant Writing

- *Participants feel that they would benefit from grant writing workshops.*
- *Simplification of the grant writing process is desired. Many, especially those from smaller libraries, feel very inadequate going to the Advisory Council regarding their grant applications. These participants feel they lack grant writing skills and are intimidated by the entire grant process.*
- *Many suggested that successful grants and model grants be shared and posted on the web.*
- Some participants suggested that the grants be written by someone at the State level.
- A request was made for more prepackaged applications like the ADA grant.
- Some participants asked for the auditing and record keeping process to be explained better and up front.

Broadened Funding

- *The most requested help is for ideas on how to deal with space issues.*
- *The LSTA needs to expand and diversify beyond technology. There needs to be more emphasis on the "Services" part of the grant.*
- *LSTA needs to add a set amount of money to the grants for technological support and maintenance of equipment.*
- *Help for smaller libraries and their specific needs is wanted.*

- More funding for reference materials is requested.
- LSTA money should not be allowed to be used as replacement dollars.
- More mid-size grants are wanted or a slight increase in mini-grant money.
- LSTA should give money for OCLC as part of the LSTA grant. Some libraries in the State do not have access to OCLC.
- More services for the elderly and disabled are needed.

Communication

- *More communication is desired with the State in order to understand the grant process better.*
- *More feedback during the grant process is wanted.*
- *Calls on the telephone or on site visits rather than traveling to Salt Lake for meetings with the Advisory Council are wanted.*
- Participants want to know what is happening nationally regarding grants.
- Utah State Library needs to communicate to the legislature success stories that have resulted from LSTA funding (e.g.,Vernal's turn around).
- Participants want to be able to request documents and receive documents online.
- Some participants request that the State help with e-copyright issues and information about current laws and legislation in this area.

Partnerships

- *More resource sharing is wanted (like Colorado, Illinois, Ohio and other states have) and more pooled funds.*
- Some participants said they would like better integration of public and academic operations.
- The shuttle and library service that operates among academic libraries could also make stops at and be extended to Public Libraries when requested.
- Ways to use Public School computers "beyond 3 PM" are wanted.

Other Advice

- *More and easier home access of PIONEER is wanted.*
- *Either no passwords for access or easier access is requested.*

LSTA Non Participants

1. What are your impressions of the LSTA and PIONEER?

Two nonparticipant groups were interviewed. Though most did not have any direct experience with LSTA, they knew what it was. PIONEER was recognized by some as a home page, but its value did not seem to be understood.

Impressions

- *LSTA provides grants for computers and technology.*
- PIONEER is a great home page and used in the schools.
- They like the databases on literary critique, Poem Finder, newspapers and magazines.

Reasons For Not Applying For LSTA

- *Some of the non participants who did not apply for LSTA money had received private donations, endowments, or money from other sources.*
- *They do not understand the grant process.*
- *There is too much paper work and technical reading. "Makes me feel inadequate."*
- "It is too much work and hassle." They do not have enough staff or time to do anything more other than take care of immediate needs.
- They do not have the time nor the desire to give presentations before the Board.
- There is "too much bureaucracy."

- Some feel they do not have a chance up against the bigger libraries.

Training

- "It is hard to go to Salt Lake City for training."
- "I am worn out" after workshops and experience " information overload."
- They are able to do their own training and feel it is sufficient.

Perceptions Concerning Technology

- *Technology draws the younger patrons.*
- *Research should be given priority over other uses of the computer and Internet.*
- With more technology librarians are becoming teachers.
- Quality of information is a concern.
- "I hate technology." vs "I couldn't do without it."
- They have problems with space -- no place for more computers.

Advice

- They need more communication in order to better understand LSTA.
- Money should be provided to change from the Dewey Decimal System to the Library of Congress System.
- They want more digitized resources.

Library Users

Responses in this section are either direct quotes or paraphrased answers and represent both "PIONEER Users" and "Automation Users." Most of the participants in each of these groups were aware of the PIONEER system, whether they used it or not.

1. What are your impressions of the Library's technology support and of PIONEER?

Positive Comments

Impressions of Technology

- *The technology in the library provides patrons with access to computers and the Internet.*
- *I use the Internet for job searches, email, shopping, medical information, newspapers, magazines and periodicals, historical research, genealogy.*
- *I would like to receive more training.*
- *Home access is a real plus.*
- Technology is a time saver.
- "I use the library's computers to run my business."

Impressions of PIONEER

- *I like the way subjects and topics are organized in PIONEER.*
- *The PIONEER web site is convenient; everything right there and fast.*
- I thought PIONEER was only for genealogy use.
- PIONEER is used as the home page but "I am not familiar with it."
- I find it self explanatory and easy to navigate.
- The PIONEER web page needs to be locked in as the first screen on all computers at the library.

Concerns

Policies and Technology

- *The lines are too long to use the computers.*
- *Time limits are too short and frustrating. I cannot accomplish enough in the time allotted. I am frustrated that children are allowed to play games that tie up computer use.*
- *More training is needed.*
- *More computers are needed; some should just be for email.*
- *The computers are too slow and crash too often. Equipment and systems need to be up-dated. Faster systems are needed.*
- *Librarians are helpful for printed materials; they are less helpful for computer needs.*
- They shouldn't allow chat rooms. But some are good if they are used for medical purposes.
- Resources need to be easier for the Hispanic population to understand and access - as well as for other cultures especially with the Olympics going to be here.
- Some of the users said that they were reluctant to use automated check out services because they were hard to figure out and it was easier to ask for assistance from the staff.

PIONEER

- *PIONEER needs to be publicized more with posters at schools and in the public. Bookmarks are useful, but more ads on television are needed. The brochures need to be redone.*
- *The PIONEER web page needs to be more user friendly and have fewer State symbols. All of the sites look too much alike. Links are too close together and all on the left side.*
- *The design needs to be warmer and more inviting.*

- PIONEER has "great overall sites;" however, it "needs to be more geared toward the digital generation."

- PIONEER reflects someone else's opinion of what is important. "I like to do my own research" in my own way.

Further Advice

Training

- *More computer courses for children and adults are needed for training purposes.*

- *On line tutorials would be great.*

- More training for patrons at a variety of levels of expertise and specialized topics (business, single parenting, etc.), would be helpful, with childcare provided.

- Children need to know there is more to the library than the Internet.

Access and Resources

- *We need increased home access to resources.*

- *Faster systems with a central network mainframe are needed. This would make up-grades easier and less expensive.*

- *There are too many inconsistencies among libraries. Things need to be standardized.*

- There needs to be a wild card option and a speller check.

- The cache needs to be emptied more regularly.

- Books need to be annotated on the computer.

- More current information is needed. On some sites the information is a year old.

- Libraries should define their purpose and communicate this to the community (are they meeting places or places of research or both?).

- More ILL access is needed as well as other library resources.

Communication

- *More collaboration between librarians and the patrons is needed.*
- It would be helpful to be able to access real people when you send messages over the Internet.
- Surveys would allow patrons to submit comments and advice. Or maybe just a suggestion box would help.
- I would like to see different libraries 'show cased' as a web site feature.

Recommendations

1. Provide more assistance and simplification of the grant process for those who do not have the background or sufficient resources for grant writing in order to make the process less intimidating.
2. Clarify all of the specific services and technological support funded by the grant.
3. Provide more technical support and more funding for this support as part of the grant funds.
4. Provide training that is more accessible and digestible, especially for the staff of smaller libraries.
5. Have more mass media publication of PIONEER and clarification of name.
6. Provide more and easier home access of library services and PIONEER.
7. Provide intent language for use (replacement versus building capability) of LSTA funds.
8. Standardize technology and technological systems used State wide to facilitate up grades and communication and services among libraries.